

Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire

# THE SUNDAY DENVER POST



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DECADE SINCE THE GREAT RECESSION

## Thriving cities leaving others behind

Denver is among the 10 U.S. metro areas that have seen the largest income gains.

By Christopher Rugaber  
The Associated Press

As the nation's economy was still reeling from the body blow of the Great Recession, Seattle's was about to take off.

In 2010, Amazon opened a headquarters in the little-known South Lake Union district — and then expanded eightfold over the next seven years to fill 36 buildings. Everywhere you look, there are signs of a thriving city: building cranes looming over streets, hotels crammed with business travelers and tony restaurants filled with diners.

Seattle is among a fistful of cities that have flourished in the 10 years since the Great Recession officially began in December 2007, even while most other large cities — and sizable swaths of rural America — have managed only modest recoveries. Denver is also on that list of 10.

But many cities are still struggling to shed the scars of recession.

In Las Vegas, half-finished housing developments, relics of the housing boom, pockmark the

RECESSION » 6A

Gentrification impact. Denver schools look at process to handle falling enrollment. »3B

## DENVER & THE WEST OTTER SIGHTING RAISES CLEANUP HOPES FOR MINE

Re-engineering near a toxic mine site in Rico may be working with the help of nature. »1B

## LIFE & CULTURE BOOK CLUBS TAKE NOTE: THE BEST READS OF 2017

Check out the list of titles — as chosen by Denver Post staffers — that will keep you turning pages. We all can't be wrong. »1E

## Voting for aid in dying was easy, but one couple found themselves struggling toward a graceful death



Susan Huschle, whose husband, Kurt, used — as a terminal-cancer patient — the aid-in-dying law on July 16, talks about their lives — and his death — together. Huschle holds a sculpture of her and Kurt's hands. Aaron Ontiveroz, The Denver Post

## “We were each in our own minds thinking: How is this going to happen?”

By Kevin Simpson The Denver Post

A year ago in November, when Susan and Kurt Huschle cast their ballots in favor of the state's aid-in-dying law, they viewed the measure with the personal detachment of a distant what-if. Three months later, Kurt faced a terminal diagnosis of a rare bile-duct cancer. Pain mounted exponentially, blasting through his medication. His once-sturdy frame rapidly diminished. And suddenly, the theoretical idea of ending his life with a doctor-prescribed medication became a very real option — one he desperately wanted to have in hand.

“We voted for it,” Susan recalls, sitting at the kitchen table where she and her husband first heard the news that he didn't have long to live. “But we didn't know anything about it.”

On July 16, exactly seven months after the law went into effect with the approval of two-thirds of Colorado voters, Kurt took aid-in-dying medication and died, at 58, in his bed at the couple's Highlands Ranch home. But the process, from paperwork to prescription and finally to practice, bred frustration, stress, uncertainty and ultimately a wife's panic in his final hours.

Their experience reflected the gap between concept and realization that has characterized the law, which took effect one year ago Saturday. While physicians, pharmacists and hospice workers sorted out their roles in the process, patients sometimes struggled to connect with willing doctors, procure medication and implement their final wishes.



Susan Huschle looks at photographs of her late husband. Kurt, who weighed about 185 pounds before his Feb. 10 cancer diagnosis, died at just 126 pounds. Aaron Ontiveroz, The Denver Post

HUSCHLE » 16A



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